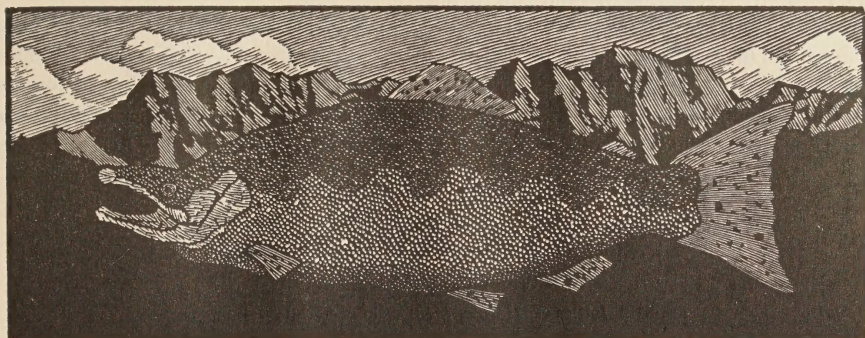


THE BOOK CLUB of CALIFORNIA  
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Mountain Trout

Richard Wagener

University of Oklahoma Press

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# Oklahoma West

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA PRESS  
AND ITS WESTERN AMERICANA

By Richard F. Olson

This is a short, informal bibliography of a University Press and some of its writers. Seventy-plus years of printing certainly cannot be condensed into one series; works important to a bookseller or collector may not be vital to a librarian or a researcher. Yet, scholarly research and readability are the mainstays of the University of Oklahoma Press. The quality of the paper (said to have a life of three hundred years) and innovative design make its books unique.

Its areas of Western American are vast: Native Americans, the Fur Trade, the California Gold Rush, Exploration and Travel, and the World of Gunfighters, Outlaws, and Lawmen.

Over the years, the Press has built a monument of Western Americana. The quality of its writers and editors is unsurpassed in an era I call the Golden Age of Western Americana, 1930–1980. After 1980, there began a decline in the number of printings by the Press of general western non-fiction. This does not mean that the quality of writing faltered or that new research was not being done. New areas of interest arose for the Press, such as European history, science, archaeology, and fiction.



William Bizzell brought the Press into being, and Joseph Bryant, the director beginning in 1929, set the scholarly standards. The Press began in the 1920s, printing the *University of Oklahoma Bulletin*. Many historical studies first appeared in this *Bulletin*. In 1929, when the Press began to produce hardcover books, some of these were used. An example is Stanley Vestal's (Professor W. S. Campbell) editing of John Seger's *Early Days among the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians*, published in the *Bulletin* in March of 1924. It became a book in 1934 as number five in the *Civilization of the American Indian Series*.

While the Press offered many scholarly books, it lacked a title that would put it in the spotlight. Such a book appeared in 1932: *Wah 'kon tah* by John Joseph Mathews, an Osage Indian. It became a "Book of the Month" selection and saved the Press from extinction. Author Will Ransom designed many books for the Press, and his eye for fine printing and design led to many classics.

In 1932, Savoie Lottinville joined as Assistant Director of the Press. The diversity in the field of Western Americana arose from his diligence and management. Writers such as Grant Foreman, Alfred Barnaby Thomas,

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Stanley Vestal, Angie Debo, Carl Coke Rister, and Edward Everett Dale established a sound foundation.

The Civilization of the American Indian Series started in 1932, the first volume being *Forgotten Frontiers* by Alfred Barnaby Thomas. A number of other well-known Southwest writers contributed to the Series in the early years: Grant Foreman's *Indian Removal* (1932), *Advancing the Frontier* (1933), and *The Five Civilized Tribes* (1934); Stanley Vestal's *New Sources of Indian History* (1943); and Angie Debo's *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic* (1934) and *The Road to Disappearance* (1941).

The first twenty volumes of the Series focus on the Indians tribes of the Plains and the United States. They encompass most of the tribes west of the Mississippi River. As time went on, areas were added to include Mexico and Central America, with many books on the Mayas, Aztecs, and Incas. Most of these books are original works and often the first written studies of these tribes. One of the most difficult titles to find in dust wrapper is *Cherokee Messenger* (1936) by Althea Bass. The Civilization of American Indian Series now numbers two hundred and thirty-five.

The next popular series is the American Exploration and Travel Series, beginning in 1937. Southwest exploration was the first area of interest, with volumes one and two by Grant Foreman, *Adventure on the Red River* (1937) and *Marcy and the Gold Seekers* (1939). It continues with many great titles, including reprints of rare nineteenth-century works. A few volumes pertain to travel in Mexico and Central America; there are also numerous volumes on the Fur Trade.

Some early volumes had small initial printings. The rarities in this series are of course the first twenty, as well as Professor Thomas D. Clark's six-volume bibliography of historical research of the South (under his chairmanship); *Travels in the Confederate States* (1948) by Professor E. Merton Coulter, in one volume; *Travels in the Old South* (1956), in three volumes; and *Travels in the New South* (1962), in two volumes, both by Clark. These volumes embrace 2,703 numbered items described by sixteen historians. The set took nineteen years to complete; *The Rhetoric of History* (1976) by Savoie Lottinville recounts its genesis. Because these are bibliographies, they are scarce and in great demand by booksellers.



Other scarce titles are *Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail* (1960) and *Prairie and Mountain Sketches* (1957), a two-volume boxed set. Number fifty-eight, Thomas Gage's *Travels in the New World*, edited by Eric S. Thompson, provides an intriguing note. The Press injected it into the series in 1970, yet had printed it twelve years earlier. It is the only title with a date not in sequence. All titles are in hardcover except number seventy-five, a paperback edition of *A Traveler in Indian Territory: The Journal of Ethan Hitchcock* (1996), edited by Grant Foreman. The American Exploration and Travel Series is now at seventy-seven volumes.

Next is the Western Frontier Library Series, started in 1953 by Rhodes Scholar Savoie Lottinville. It was Lottinville's idea to make rare books available to the common man. He encouraged libraries to subscribe to this series, and each small book sold for two dollars. Most of the works were reprints of early writings introduced by prominent historians. The first Oklahoma Press volume was *The Vigilantes of Montana* by T. J. Dimsdale, with an introduction by E. De Golyer. One original in this series, and not a reprint, is X. Beidler, *Vigilante* (1957), edited by Helen Sanders and William Bertsche, Jr., with a foreword by A. B. Guthrie, Jr.

A notable rarity of this set is number fifty-two, *My Life on the Plains* (1962) by General George Armstrong Custer, with an introduction by Edgar I. Stewart. This book is the only large book of the set, and although it stands out oddly among the others, it is the first Press edition. The smaller second edition was issued in 1976 as part of a six-volume boxed set (The Centennial Edition) with other Custer titles. Today the Western Frontier Literary Series stands at sixty-five volumes.

Here are the rarities of the University of Oklahoma Press that are sought after by collectors and booksellers today. No book is unprocurable, but some volumes are very hard to find. Two that I found hardest to secure were *The Range Cattle Industry* (1939) by Edward Everett Dale, in dust wrapper, and a modern first edition, *Genocide and Vendetta* (1981) by Lynwood Carranco and Estle Beard. This book concerns the Round Valley Wars of Northern California. Lawsuits over this book led to its being withdrawn from distribution by the Press. I inquired at the Press in 1988 about the background of the book, but could get little information. I did

learn that one or more of the families involved filed suit for slander and plagiarism. The book depicts the brutal killings, kidnaping of Indian children, and the cattle feuds, murder, and trials of the Yolla Bolly country in Northern California from 1840 to 1910.

Scarce and expensive today is *A History of the Lewis and Clark Journals* (1976) by Paul Cutright, while Grant Foreman's *Muskogee* (1939) is the most difficult of his books to find; in fact, all of his books bring a premium. His work on the Five Civilized Tribes is a true classic. He wrote seven books for the Press, but I believe his *History of Oklahoma* (1942) is his finest work. Carolyn Thomas Foreman, his wife, also wrote two great books for the Press, *Oklahoma Imprints* (1936) and *Indians Abroad* (1943).

Modern first editions include *The Lincoln County War* (1992) by Frederick Nolan. There are fifty copies of this special leather-bound edition by renowned photo-collector and publisher of True West Robert G. McCubbin of El Paso, Texas. Also in a special edition with slip case is *Doc Holliday, A Family Portrait* (1998) by Karen Holliday Tanner, produced in seventy-five numbered and signed copies.

Frederick Nolan wrote *The West of Billy the Kid* (1998) and had twenty-five copies bound in leather with slip case; I had the good fortune to have the author inscribe a copy to me. His work on the Lincoln County War and Billy the Kid is known throughout the field of Western Americana.

The rarest first edition of the Press books is *The Modocs and Their War* (1959) by Keith Murray. Over the years, every copy I have seen states "2nd edition, 1st edition entirely destroyed by fire." This may be true, but in 1981 at the Antiquarian Book Fair in San Francisco, I had a long talk with the great bookseller Jeff Dykes of College Park, Maryland. We were talking about the Press, and I brought up the topic of *The Modocs and Their War*. He told me there were fifteen copies of the first edition that were not lost in the fire and that he had seen a few of them. He said someone at the Press informed him that staff took some, but when those books were found, they were destroyed. He believed, and I have no reason to doubt him, that copies are still out there. Also, in early 1980 I had a talk with Edward Shaw of the Press. He had heard there were a few



saved but had not seen one and would try to locate one for me. Unfortunately, nothing ever came of it, so the search continues for a rare edition.

The catalogue of The University of Oklahoma Press Books 1954-55 gives us a look at Western Americana that now encompasses the Fur Trade, the Cattle Trade, and the emergence of the western critic Ramon Adams. Western Gunfights and Cowboys have been the subject of constant debate, but Adams brought disagreements to the forefront with humor and precision, correcting spelling errors, exposing myths, and destroying lies.

Ramon Adams's work is monumental. No bibliographer covers the field of the Cattle Trade so thoroughly as his still useful *Rampaging Herd* (1959). The same is true for his *Six-guns and Saddle Leather* (1954 & 1959), the main bibliography dealing with Gunfighters, Outlaws, and Lawmen. His book *Burs Under the Saddle* (1964) is a critique of books whose authors, in Adams's opinion, either distorted information or had facts wrong. The name Ramon Adams is almost synonymous with the Oklahoma Press.

Other books by Ramon Adams for the Press were *Western Words* (1944 & 1968), *Come An' Get It: The Story of a Cowboy Cook* (1952), *The Best of the American Cowboy* (1957), *A Fitting Death for Billy the Kid* (1960), and *From the Pecos to the Powder* (1965). Two books published after his death, in 1976, were *The Language of the Railroader* (1977) and *More Burs under the Saddle* (1979). While on the subject of bibliography, two others come to mind: *South of Forty* (1947) by Jesse L. Rader and *The Booklover's Southwest* (1955) by W. S. Campbell.

A story of the University of Oklahoma Press would not be complete without mention of Edward Everett Dale, a professor at the University. He wrote *The Range Cattle Industry* (1930), *Cherokee Cavaliers* (1939) with Gaston Litton, *Cow Country* (1942), and *The Indians of the Southwest* (1949). In 1997, I happened to come across a record album (set of four) produced and recorded by The University of Oklahoma Extension Division in 1951 called "History of Oklahoma." In these records Dale narrates the history of Oklahoma in eight parts: The Five Civilized Tribes; Western Indians; The Coming of the Cowman; Ranchmen and Cowboys; Sooner and Set-



tlers; the Boomers; Life in Oklahoma Territory; and Life in Indian Territory. To me, this set shows the versatility of the professor and his love for history.

An author in the realm of Californiana is Keith Lummis, son of Charles Lummis, a famous Southern California promoter at the turn of the century. Keith, with his sister, started the manuscript of their father's life. When she died, in 1967, he took over and gave a good first-hand account of growing up with a famous father. He depicts a hard life because of the notoriety of his father and his entertainment escapades. When Keith finished the manuscript, he took it to the Press and learned that they had people there who would rewrite it, giving him some credits. Being the strong-willed person he is — a Coast Guard and Secret Service veteran — he said, "No, thanks! I wrote it myself; take it or leave it!" They took *Charles F. Lummis: The Man and His West* (1975). What a wonderful book it is; it won a prize in 1976 for book of the year.

A look back takes us to a unique writer and biographer, W. H. Hutchinson, of Chico, California. His research on Gene Manlove Rhodes is a special tribute to a great writer. "Hutch" wrote many books and articles on Rhodes. For the Press he did *A Bar Cross Man* (1956), *The Rhodes Reader* (1957), *Oil-Land and Politics* (1965), and *The World, the Work, and the West of W.H.D. Koerner* (1979). He also wrote introductions for Rhodes's books in the Western Frontier Library Series. A forceful writer and lecturer, Hutchinson's *Little World Waddies* (1946), a non-Oklahoma title with the J. Frank Dobie introduction, is a classic on Rhodes. He received the Outstanding Professor of California State Colleges and Universities award in 1977, a tribute to a man loved by all Californians.

J. Evetts Haley was another western writer with numerous books in the Cowboy and Gunfighter fields. He wrote *George W. Littlefield, Texan* (1943) and a revised *Charles Goodnight, Cowman and Plainsman* (1948). His *Jeff Milton, Good Man with a Gun* (1948) is a fine book; also, the Press reprinted his *XIT Ranch* in 1953 in the Western Frontier Library Series.

The Press had so many great writers in the field of the Wild West that to pick just the popular ones would be an injustice; here is a sampling, however. *The 101 Ranch* (1937) by E. Collings and Alma England; *Border*

*Captives* (1940) by Carl Coke Rister; *Frontier Justice* (1949); and *Shanghai Pierce* (1953) by Chris Emmett. Robert K. DeArment has done great work with his *Bat Masterson* (1979), *Knights of the Green Cloth* (1982), *George Scarborough* (1992), and *Alias, Frank Canton* (1996).

A few more writers who have contributed good work for the Press over the years are J. W. Vaughn, Dan Thrapp, Edwin Sweeney, and William T. Hagan on Native Americans; Richard H. Dillon and John Boessenecker on California; and John E. Sunder and Paul Phillips on the Fur Trade. Don Russell wrote a fine book in 1960 on *Buffalo Bill*, and Joe Rosa of England is well known for his work on *Wild Bill Hickok*.

Now to take a look at identifying first editions. In the early years of the Press, "first edition" was not always stated. Only the year of publication appeared. Those from the 1930s are first editions unless they state "second" or "third printing." During the period 1940–1970, "first edition" appears in type, with later printings also noted. More modern titles have the common system of numerals 1–10. The lowest number of the sequence is the edition; as editions increase, printers remove numbers to match it. Since 1990, some volumes have appeared without dust wrappers, or exist only in paperback.

The University of Oklahoma Press cared about the fine art of printing and appearance. For instance, the paper used by the Press in the early years was of the highest quality, while, for example, the colophon of Grant Foreman's *The Five Civilized Tribes* stated it had been "composed on the monotype in eleven point Kennerley with one point leading." The selection of this type created by the artistic Mitchell Kennerley, who published some of H. G. Wells's work, shows to what extent the Press went to produce high-quality printing.

The University of Oklahoma Press was not the only university press to emerge in the 1920s. Some of those that began between 1925 and 1930 are Duke, New Mexico, Stanford, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania. Many others started in the period 1930–1940. Their numbers continued to grow, so that those doing fine work today are too numerous to mention. For instance, I just read *Cowboy Justice* by Jim Globor (Texas Tech), Mas-



*sacre at Cheyenne Hole* by John Monnett (Colorado), and *Doniphan's Epic March* by Joseph G. Dawson III (Kansas) — all excellent Western Americana.

One press that is on the scale of Oklahoma with many western titles is the University of Nebraska's Bison Books. They have republished titles from long ago and in an inexpensive paperback format suited for the general reader. They are selective but have an eye for popular out-of-print titles. Nebraska has done what Oklahoma's Savoie Lottinville did in 1952, putting great works into the hands of readers.

Is the University of Oklahoma Press active today? Of course it is. A glance at any of their new catalogues shows us a wide variety of great titles — original works and reprints. They once printed a saying in the front of their books that I wish they would bring back: "The Printed Page is Everyman's University." It fits the University of Oklahoma Press so well.



Richard F. Olson, who lives in the Bay Area, is a long-time collector of in the field Western History.

## A Sketch of John DePol

By Donald R. Fleming

John DePol is a very special person. Born and brought up in the bohemian atmosphere of early twentieth-century Greenwich Village, he began sketching at the age of fifteen as he recorded many of the fast-disappearing landmarks and scenes of New York's waterfront area.

Sketching led to etching, and his first efforts in that medium soon emerged from between a set of borrowed washing machine rollers.

After high school graduation, DePol attended classes at the Art Students League, where he learned the basics of lithography. Then the outbreak of World War II interrupted further studies, and he found himself attached to the 8th and 9th Army Air Forces as a clerk-typist, stationed in Northern Ireland.

He spent his off-hours working on what was to become a wonderful collection of sketches of the Irish countryside and architecture. As his bases of operations shifted, he was also able to capture American activities in England and France. These sketches provided basic material for many of his later etchings and wood engravings.

DePol managed to get a few hours of instruction at the Belfast School of Technology: "I walked in to see the headmaster ... one day, and he told me the school just didn't take on casual students. But I kept after him and showed him the etchings and lithographs I had done, and he finally let me come in." This episode provided his final fling at formal education.

Back in the States, he met and married (after a four-year engagement) the lovely Thelma Roth, who was to become his lifelong partner and inspiration. He experimented with copperplate but found himself drawn to wood engraving, an art that he soon mastered to the point where many of New York's most prominent printers sought out his expertise in solving design and illustration problems.

Stints with the well-known typographer Lewis W. White, The Thistle Press of Clarke and Way, and the fine wood engraver Bernard Bussel-Smith followed, and DePol was ready to devote time to commissions from such diverse clients as The Woodcut Society, The Prairie Press, The Golden Hind Press, and The Benjamin Franklin keepsake series. The Franklin series ran through thirty editions from 1953 to 1983 and included four hundred and one of his most charming wood engravings. "Tommy" Tommasini, printer to the University of California and a Book Club of California regular, reprinted letterpress many of the Franklin series.

As availability has allowed, DePol has used Turkish boxwood, Venezuelan boxwood, and American maple. Diminishing sources for the woods have made it difficult to obtain the finest woods in any quantity.

A Poco proof press (Valenti Angelo used a similar machine) was DePol's first acquisition for his press room — soon replaced by Ben Grauer's little Albion and then paired with with Frederic Goudy's Albion.



Some of DePol's most elegant work is to be found in Lewis and Dorothy Allen's *Four Stories*, John Fass's *A Primer of Life along the Hammer Creek or Some Friends and Enemies of the Turtle*, Stephen O. Saxe's *American Hand Presses*, and in many of the publications of John Anderson's *Pickering Press*, Neil Shaver's *Yellow Barn Press*, Morris Gelfand's *Stone House Press*, and, of course, his own *End Grain Press*.

DePol's methods are traditional and the results are pin-point accurate, charming and reminiscent of the finest of Bewick's work, with which, incidentally, his are universally compared. This is his description of his working techniques:

After coating a block of South American boxwood with a thin film of dense printer's ink (rolled on with a hand brayer), I let the block stand until it is thoroughly dry. Then I rub the end of a tallow candle over the blackened surface with a few strokes and with my thumb and palm spread it thinly and evenly over the entire surface.

I make my sketches with carbon pencil on tracing paper the size of my block. One is traced over the other until a satisfactory design is reached and the final one fully developed in tone. This drawing is traced again on a separate sheet, but this time with a hard graphite pencil and only the essential structure of the composition. By placing the tracing paper face down on the block and anchoring it securely, I use a burnisher to relieve the lines on the receptive tallow coating, where they appear as a dark gray on the blackened surface. Under good light they are perceptible enough to provide me with a guide for my engraving.... The interpretation of tone is definitely a creative step as I must use my graver to simulate the values I had arranged in my drawing — which of course was done in another medium (carbon) on white paper — whereas, in engraving my block I work from black to white. As I begin to engrave, each incision of my tool shows on the black block as a light and, after I have made a few incisions to establish the exact placements of the skeleton plan..., I begin the exciting business of engraving the tones and textures. ...by a series of short jabs placed close together and modulated, I am able to create form, values, and textures. The same holds true of both black and white lines which appear prominently in my sky areas.

Unlike the etcher, who customarily takes trial proofs during the process of etching..., I ordinarily complete my block before making a first proof.

Now that I have engraved many, many blocks I find that I am usually satisfied with the state of the first proof. However, occasional added refinements are necessary. A passage needs lightening to accent further its function in relation to other and darker values that surround it, or certain textures may need working over. In such cases, I clean the block of the printer's ink and add more engraving but take care lest I am tempted to overwork it.

While I have used a variety of tools, I find that an elliptic tint tool, a flat graver, and a round graver are all I need....

The DePols make their home in New Jersey, but health problems have forced them to leave their lovely two-story home (often pictured in delightful holiday engravings) and move into a less demanding condominium where John can continue his incomparable work.

## Review

*Black-letter: An Interpretation of Events Relating to the Time and Presence of Johann Gutenberg.* By Jeffrey Atherton. The Bieler Press, 4216 1/4 Glencoe Avenue, Marina Del Rey, California 90292. 120 numbered copies, 1 – 120, \$1,500, and 26 copies hand-lettered A–Z.

The date at which the father of letterpress printing was born is lost in the mists of time. We have of late, however, celebrated Johann Gutenberg's five-hundredth birthday. Though scholars continue to express differing views of Herr Gutenberg's experiences as an inventor/printer, we are certain that he would have been gratified to see how, in this technological age, and after dire predictions regarding the demise of interest in the aesthetics of the printed page, we in California (and how far is that from Mainz?) are still devoted to the production and collecting of letterpress printed books. Jeffrey Atherton's *Black-letter: An Interpretation of Events Relating to the Time and Presence of Johann Gutenberg*, printed by Gerald Lange at his Bieler Press, is just such a suitable homage to the *princeps* among printers.



Johann Gutenberg emerges from the pages of history as a great Faustian figure, a Medieval artificer, whose knowledge of the alchemy of metals and the physics of heat, together with a passionate desire to improve the way things were being done, helped to usher in the Renaissance. The text of *Black-letter* presents us with an unusual interpretation of the historical possibilities surrounding the beginnings of printing in Mainz. Indeed, it occasionally rises to the level of poetical description. It is a play without a stage. The narrative winds through and around the life and times of Gutenberg and his contemporaries. One may start reading anywhere in the book — as the Prospectus promises us, it is “a fragmented *polyphonic narrative* (the text is a synchronized gathering of technical and historical notes, and fictional journal entries, letters, dialogues, dreams, songs, and scene descriptions).” The book’s elegant hand-lettered chapter headings inform the reader of the story’s theme and its six variations. “On discussing events displaced by...desire” is followed by “On discussing events displaced by...reason,” which is followed by events displaced by viewing point, fear, conflict, and finally “...events displaced by history.” Jeffrey Atherton’s *polyphonic narrative* infuses the text with letters, dialogues, notes, and delightful, pithy asides by a succession of carpenters, journeymen, physicians, etc. *Black-letter* was indeed an ambitious project by printer/publisher Gerald Lange (who announces himself as responsible for its contextual arrangement) and writer/photographer Jeffrey Atherton. Delightfully described as a “bibliographic ghost,” this book adds a worthy Californian entry to Gutenberg’s bibliography.

As befits a book dedicated to the father of typographers, *Black-letter* was printed letterpress, but in this new millennium Gerald Lange prints from polymer plates. The typefaces chosen were Matthew Carter’s Miller, based on nineteenth-century Scotch Romans, with Cézanne titling above the double-column format, described in the Prospectus as an “ascetic double column *mise-en-page*.” The homage continues in the choice of paper — an Umbria Bianco hand made at the Fabriano Mills, active since Gutenberg’s time. This edition of *Black-letter* consists of 146 signed and numbered copies, twenty-six of which were printed on parchment. The book is quite classic in its proportions — 9 1/3 by 12 3/4 inches — and

contains forty-five printed pages. The binding, rich steel-gray and black Japanese silk, was executed by Daniel E. Kelm at The Wide Awake Garage. Unlike Gutenberg's great forty-two-line Bible, Lange's book provides us with title and colophon pages. On the front cover we see Jeffrey Atherton's *mirror and mould in the window*, described in the Colophon as a "photographic image printed from glass plates using the venerable colotype process."

Among many fascinating descriptions, one of my favorite passages is the one in which Herr Gutenberg, while printing his great Bible, instructs his new employee, the talented young Peter Schoeffer, formerly a calligrapher at the Sorbonne, but now Gutenberg's apprentice typesetter and proofreader:

...Great care must be given to the task of examining the first printed sheet; it is a map that once charted will assist men of the press in arriving at their goal. The journeyman must look closely at this sheet to uncover those letters who print either too bold or too weak. Upon the discovery of those imperfect letters in the forme the paper, not the type, must be altered. The cage which holds the sheet must now be fitted with the addition of small fragments of thin paper to increase the force of the impression where the letters appear weak. Where the letters appear bold, the remedy is to either reduce the thickness of the support behind the printed sheet itself, or, in some cases, all of the rest of the letters may be made to print more boldly. Openings are cut into this second sheet for the bold letters so they do not gain impression from its addition. The rest of the letters then print with this added thickness. In this way, the letters are all brought into accord on the final page and harmony is communicated to the eye. The shop labourers, from the casters of type to the pressman, must all work as if one for this beauty to be brought to pass.

Two "Testaments" encapsulate the text of *Black-letter*. The first is an adaptation of the colophon of a book which Herr Gutenberg printed around 1460 — the *Catholicon*, a Latin dictionary and grammar, the first large secular book ever to be printed. Here the *princeps* among master printers speaks out for himself in proudly announcing that this book was "perfected, not by means of quill, reed or stylus, but by the admirable concord, proportion, and measure of *patronae* and *formae*....."





# Announcing an Exhibition at The Book Club of California

October 1, 2001



WHEN I WAS FIRST ASKED IN 1991 to be Chairman of the Exhibitions Committee, little did I realize that I would still be doing it ten years and eighty-two exhibitions later. The exciting part of arranging for and installing exhibitions at the Club rooms is the wide variety of materials one is privileged to work with. Items that are normally shown only in museums and libraries behind locked cases are in the collections of Club members who are willing to share their treasures with their fellow members.

Rare items such as the Nuremberg Chronicle, William Morris sketch books, maps of California as an island, original artwork of Mac Harshberger and Valenti Angelo and glorious hand bookbindings share space with the not-so-rare such as members' favorite cookbooks, paper, and the annual Rounce & Coffin Club's Western Books.

Meeting the individuals featured in an exhibition ranged from the raconteur Dick Dillon, the poet William Everson, and the delightful Ward Ritchie and the stunning

Gloria Stuart to the great American wood engraver John DePol (whose exhibition is scheduled for December 2001). These have been highlights of the job. Also, the wonderful people on the Exhibition Committee such as Dr. Adela Roatcap, Nancy Hoyt, John Hawk, and the late Duncan Olmsted have been more than generous with their time.

Thanks to all involved for making these exhibitions a success.

— Jack Maclean

## 1991-2001: TEN YEARS OF BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA EXHIBITIONS

Feb '91 Richard H. Dillon: A Retrospective Exhibit The Feathered Serpent Press

Apr '91 Rounce & Coffin Club Western Books of 1991 Engdahl Typography

May '91 Ephemeria in the collection of two Gentlemen: George Fox and

Apr '96 Rounce & Coffin Club Western Books of 1996 One Heart Press

May '96 A Quarter Century: Bookworks by Kitty Maryatt of Two Hands Press

& Scripps College Press Two Hands Press

# 1991-2001: TEN YEARS OF BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA EXHIBITIONS

- Feb '91 Richard H. Dillon: A Retrospective Exhibit The Feathered Serpent Press
- Apr '91 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 1991 Engdahl Typography
- May '91 Ephemera in the collection of two Gentlemen: George Fox and Bruce Shyer Arion Press
- Jul '91 George Wharton James from the collection of Dr Roger K. Larson
- Aug '91 Expatriate California Printers: Peter Bishop, Lee Engdahl, Zachary Pearce, Wesley B. Tanner Wesley B. Tanner
- Oct '91 Maps of the Gold Rush from members' collections The Paper Crane
- Nov '91 William Morris, The Unpublished Works: from the Sanford e' Helen Berger Collection Anchor & Acorn Press
- Jan '92 The Press in Tuscany Alley: The Tradition Continues: Clifford Burke, James Wehlage, Peter Koch James Wehlage
- Feb '92 Pochoir: The art of coloring with stencils, from the collection of Dr. Adela S. Roatcap James Wehlage
- Apr '92 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 1992 Engdahl Typography
- May '92 The Collector e' the Collected: miniature books from Alan Dietch and from California Printers Juniper Von Phitzer
- Jul '92 Gifts e' Acquisitions for the collection of the Book Club of California Anchor & Acorn Press
- Aug '92 Valenti Angelo: original artwork from the collection of Jack Maclean James Wehlage
- Oct '92 California as an Island: Maps in the collection of Glen Mc Laughlin Arion Press
- Nov '92 William Everson from the collection of George Fox Engdahl Typography
- Jan '93 Work of Students George R. Kane, UC Santa Cruz George Kane
- Feb '93 Mineralogy e' Gemology from the collection of Wayne and Donna Leicht Nut Quad Press
- Apr '93 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 1993 Engdahl Typography
- May '93 So, What Is An Artist's Book Anyway? from the collection of Dr. Adela S. Roatcap James Wehlage
- Jun '93 The Nuremberg Chronicle 1493-1993 from members' collections and the Gleeson Library at USF James Wehlage
- Aug '93 Lawrence Clark Powell: A Biographical Exhibition from the collection of Dr. Roger K. Larson Peter Koch
- Oct '93 The Maps of San Francisco Bay from members' collections Arion Press
- Nov '93 Cookbooks from members' collection Juniper Von Phitzer
- Jan '94 Norman E. Tanis and the Santa Susana Press Patrick Reagh
- Feb '94 Ward Ritchie/Gloria Stuart: 'our meeting again' James Wehlage
- Apr '94 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 1994 Poltroon Press
- May '94 C.W. Beaumont from the collection of Dr. Adela S. Roatcap James Wehlage
- Jun '94 Design Bookbindings: Constance Hunter, Joanne Sonnicksen, Eleanore Ramsey Peter Koch
- Aug '94 Eric Gill from the Albert Sperisen collection at the Gleeson Library, USF The Greenwood Press
- Oct '94 The Sacramento Book Collectors Club: History, Publications, Ephemera Stalwart Sloth & Eagle
- Nov '94 Atlases from members' collections Arion Press
- Dec '94 Cookbooks from members' collections Juniper Von Phitzer
- Jan '95 Robert Louis Stevenson: An Exhibition of Fine Press Books Feathered Serpent Press
- Feb '95 An Elegance of Line: The art of Mac Harshberger, from the collection of William W. Whitney James Wehlage
- Apr '95 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 1995 Anchor & Acorn
- May '95 A. Edward Newton ("The Caliph") lent by the Free Library of Philadelphia and others Hillside Press
- Jul '95 The Hogarth Press e' Bloomsbury from the Bloomsbury Workshop, London Poltroon Press
- Sep '95 Maps of Western North America from members' collections Arion Press
- Nov '95 Ballooning: An Exhibition from the Sonnicksen Collection Peter Koch
- Jan '96 Paper: an Exhibition Anchor & Acorn
- Feb '96 Will Bradley from the collection of David H. Elliott Artichoke Press
- Apr '96 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 1996 One Heart Press
- May '96 A Quarrier Century: Bookworks by Kitty Maryatt of Two Hands Press e' Scripps College Press Two Hands Press
- Jun '96 D'Ambrosio; 1986 and Beyond: A Retrospective Exhibit D'Ambrosio
- Jun '96 American Book Design/1930 from members' collections James Wehlage
- Aug '96 Ward Ritchie from the collections of Barbara Land e' Albert Sperisen Patrick Reagh
- Oct '96 Finishing in Hand Bookbinding: the Faheys' book bound by divers hands Peter Koch
- Dec '96 Christmas, A Festive Book Exhibit from members' collections Arion Press
- Jan '97 Circa 1900: The Golden Age of Book Illustration, from the John Lehner collection Wilsted & Taylor
- Mar '97 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 1997 Richard Seibert
- Apr '97 Britain Meets The Bay: British Artists' Books from Califia Books Poltroon Press
- Jun '97 Oyer: the publications of Robert Hawley Mackintosh Printing
- Nov '97 Merle Armitage from the collection of George Gelles Arion Press
- Nov '97 The California Gold Rush from the collection of Daniel G. Volkmann, Jr. James Wehlage
- Jan '98 From Codex to Cross Structure: A Bookbinder's Working Collection Hillside Press
- Mar '98 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 1998 Anchor & Acorn
- Apr '98 Window on Japan: Contemporary Japanese Children's Books Artichoke Press
- Jun '98 The Allen Press: A Memorial Exhibition Anchor & Acorn
- Aug '98 The Work of Gloria Stuart Anchor & Acorn
- Aug '98 Designs for an Integrated Typography: The Golyonooza Letter Foundry e' Press The Greenwood Press
- Oct '98 Peter e' Donna Thomas: Twenty Years of Books Thomas Press
- Dec '98 California Children's Books, 1836-1936, from the collection of James Silverman Juniper Von Phitzer
- Jan '99 Thomas Bewick, A Continuing Legend from the collection of Geraldine Cole The Arts & Crafts Press
- Apr '99 Robin Price, work of printer Robin Price, Dine Hill House Design
- May '99 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 1999 Peter Koch
- Aug '99 Albert Sperisen, 1908-1999: A Memorial Exhibition Yolla Bolly Press
- Sep '99 California 49: Maps of California from the 16th century to the present Año Nuevo Island Press
- Oct '99 Tales of Whales and other Sea Stories, from members' collections James Wehlage
- Dec '99 Movable Books from the collection of Margaret L. Class D'Ambrosio
- Jan '00 Gifts to the Library for the collection of The Book Club of California Anchor & Acorn
- Apr '00 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 2000 Peter Koch
- May '00 A Kelmcott Miscellany: Books by and about William Morris from the Club's collection Nut Hill House Design
- Jun '00 The Charm of the Unexpected: "Containers for Intragrammes" from Le Musée Royal de Mariemont, Belgium Artichoke Press
- Sep '00 Wilder's Wit e' Wisdom: Wilder Bentley's books from the collection of John McBride Nut Hill House Design
- Nov '00 The Wonderful World of Oz from the collection of Peter Hanff and the M. Wallace Friedman Collection, Gleeson Library Richard Seibert
- Jan '01 Fine Hand Bindings for Book Club of California Publications. An international invitational exhibit Artichoke Press
- Mar '01 The Eiffel Tower, art, ephemera, and artifacts from the Sanford e' Helen Berger collection Richard Seibert
- May '01 Rounce e' Coffin Club Western Books of 2001 Anchor & Acorn
- Jun '01 Printer's Trade Cards from the collection of George Fox Nomad Printing
- Oct '01 10 Years of BCC Exhibitions 1991-2001 from the collection of the Book Club of California Peter Koch
- Dec '01 John De Pol, Master Wood Engraver from the collection of Donald and Kathi Fleming Rocket Postcards





On the last page of *Black-letter*, Jeffrey Atherton introduces a note of irony, a final guffaw, if you will — the colophon from Abbot Johann Trithemius of Sponheim's *Annales Hirsaugienses*, in which Johann Gutenberg is not mentioned at all, but the not-so-gracious banker Johann Fust and his son-in-law, Peter Schoeffer, having learned his lessons well from Herr Gutenberg, now proudly accept the laurels for "inventing the art of printing." *Sic transit gloria mundi*.

— Dr. Adela S. Roatcap

### In Memoriam: STELLA PATRI

1 November 1896 — 31 March 2001

by Joanne Sonnichsen

The dark, oily waters of the flooding Arno river in Florence receded, leaving in their wake an incredible amount of damage. On 4 November 1966, the librarians of Florence called for help for the thousands of soggy, seemingly irreplaceable books. An American bookbinder, fresh from specialized studies in England, France, and Italy, and professional work in San Francisco, responded.

Thus began, at the age of seventy, Stella Patri's international reputation in book restoration. Other countries have their pioneers in the research and amazing new developments in book restoration which have evolved as a result of the Florence flood — Stella Patri was our own. Stella was now working in her true vocation, one that was to last nearly thirty years and was to be stopped only by failing eyesight and deteriorating health.

During this period Stella's continuing studies and research established her as a source of information on materials and techniques. Her investigations into the nature of vellum, for example, developed into an important resource for other bookbinders, and she was generous with her advice and help. Her first love was paper, and her research into the nature of paper took her from night-school courses in chemistry to the paper makers of Japan. As her reputation grew, she worked for a succession of libraries and private collectors.

Petite but strong, full of the capacity for enjoyment, Stella was open and vivacious. Fierce in her zeal against the enemies of quality, in books as well as in life, she was equally outspoken when these enemies (carelessness, insensitivity, etc.) were remotely suggested.

In Stella's second-floor bindery, complete with her bindery cats, she welcomed colleagues, clients, and other student bookbinders with a warm smile and obvious interest.

Born in Canada, Stella came to San Francisco in time for the 1906 earthquake and fire. Here she met and married Italian-born artist Giacomo Patri. The idea of Stella's binding of Giacomo's 1938 book, *White Collar*, introduced her to the charms of bookbinding. She was able to study for a while with Octavia Holden until it became obvious that *White Collar*, printed at home in individual sheets, could not be bound in a traditional fashion. Now she had found her vocation, but her lessons had to be terminated. She returned to her job of raising three boys, Piero, Ramo, and Tito, and taking good care of the family during the Depression. During World War II, Stella, a pacifist, worked first as a welder on Liberty ships, then for the American Red Cross.

In 1952, she, Giacomo, Piero, and Tito went to Milan, where Piero was studying architecture. Yes, there was a bookbinding course, but she wasn't allowed into the college, and private lessons would have meant family disruption. Again, the dream was postponed.

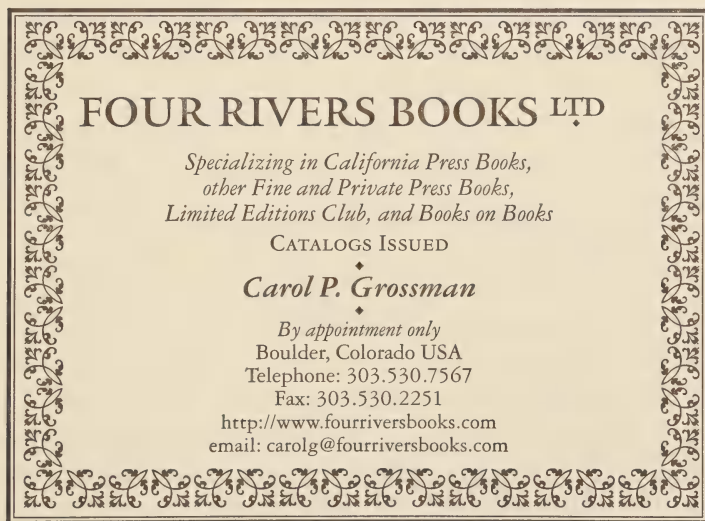
After twenty-five years, Stella and Giacomo divorced, and Stella began work in San Rafael at the Cottage Book Shop. At last she was finally able to pursue her study of bookbinding, and for the next few years, on her day off, she studied with Peter Fahey. Stella later worked for booksellers Newbegin and Paul Elder, but found that the demands of her job did not leave enough time or energy for bookbinding in the evenings. By that time she had decided to concentrate on book restoration, and she knew she needed further study. When she "retired," she felt that she could use her ninety dollars a month from Social Security for living expenses while studying in Europe. In 1962 she left San Francisco for Rome and the study of document restoration at the Istituto di Patologia del Libro. Stella remained there for four months until she could no longer stand



Rome's summer heat. She left for Paris and study in leather and gold with Jules Fache. Then she went to England to work another four months with a retired bookbinder.

Stella returned to San Francisco. Peter Fahey, in Europe at the time, let Stella use her bindery and had left a few commissions for her to complete, but her first professional test came from Mrs. Tommasini at the U.C. Medical Library. Stella was given nineteen books to restore, which she completed to everyone's (her own included) satisfaction.

In the fall of 1966 Stella decided to take a combined vacation, leather-purchasing trip, and visit with her youngest son, Tito, then in London. On 4 November she read of the flood in Florence. She knew she could be of help, but, at seventy, not by carrying the books out of the mud. Her offer of help was accepted, and in late December she joined the team led by Roger Powell. After a month she felt that she had to return to her work in San Francisco. Soon afterward she received a telephone call requesting her services again in Florence, this time as a paid professional. She returned for two months on her second session and later in the year spent another month in Florence, this time with Anthony Cains's team.



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Back in San Francisco, her growing reputation for well-researched, meticulous work established her as the expert in book restoration. In 1972 she became one of the founding members of The Hand Bookbinders of California (still a dynamic organization after nearly thirty years) and a contributing presence at meetings until her health no longer permitted her to attend.

In 1988, the Women of Achievement, Vision and Excellence (WAVE) award, given to exceptional women over the age of seventy (now presented by Lifeprint), was presented to Stella for her leadership and pioneering spirit in her contributions to the community. She was awarded the title of Honorary Member of the Guild of Book Workers in 1993. Stella was feted by the Hand Bookbinders of California in 1996, and 1 November 1996 was designated "Stella Nicole Patri Day" by Mayor Willie Brown.

In 1995 Stella Patri became one of the earliest recipients of the Oscar Lewis Award of the Book Club of California for her outstanding contribution to the book arts.

One of the treasures of the Book Club of California library is the collection of transcribed oral histories of those concerned with fine printing and books, and it is here that you can meet Stella at age eighty-three. Within "The Hand Bookbinding Tradition in the San Francisco Bay Area," Berkeley: Regional Oral History Office, 1982, is Stella Patri's fascinating history told as she might tell it to you. Her voice, her authority, her reservations, and her unique charm come through the written page as she still continues to inspire and delight.

## Serendipity

### MUSINGS FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

In mid-June, the American Library Association came to town. For this occasion, Peter Koch, printer of the renowned *Quarterly News-Letter*, turned his talents elsewhere. Off his press came twelve hundred crisply designed copies of *Rare Books & Manuscript Collections in the Libraries of the*

San Francisco Bay Area. How did the ALA have access to such a fine letterpress printer? We would normally say, "The answer is blowin' in the wind," but then the title page gives it all away: "The Book Club of California 2001." Look to Koch a copy.

As Marion the Librarian of "The Music Man" fame was in town 25,000 strong, so was the "Wells Fargo Wagon," and off we went to meet with "The Book Guys" at the Commonwealth Club. A flyer, which our ephemeralist instincts demanded we collect, invited all to attend "the book appraisal fair and live taping of the nationally syndicated public radio program" to be broadcast on June 27.

After all, Wells, Fargo & Co's Express brought in books for Antiquarian Epes Ellery back in the '50s — here our wife would interject, "Tell them you mean the 1850s. Not everyone lives in the nineteenth century!" Only time saved a national audience from hearing us recite the entire collected works of a minor California poet, whose very genius was inspired by Wells Fargo. We refer to a poor misjudged stagecoach robber, who trumpeted his *real* occupation to all who would read: "Black Bart, the Po8."

Mike Cuthbert has a resonant, booming voice, just fit for radio, and good wit. At the other end of the table, appraiser Allan Stypeck, president of Second Story Books in the Capital City of this great nation, exuded knowledge, humor, and practicality. On this occasion, the filling of the sandwich was none other than Nicholas Basbanes. For those not afflicted with "the Gentle Madness" of Book Collecting, Basbanes has just produced his second volume on the love of books, *Patience & Fortitude*, taken from the names of the stone lions guarding the New York Public Library.

We think "Patience & Fortitude" should be the name of a special award for those BCC members who actually read our column, but we do say "Hurrah!" for Basbanes. Where his first appeared in a first edition of six thousand copies, his second is hardly second with forty thousand. A third is already in the works, and a fourth volume contemplated. We can only assume that "a gentle madness" afflicts writers as well as collectors.

One point Basbanes made about university libraries intrigued us. Not



only does the amount of books matter, but there is a direct ratio between acquisitions and doctorates granted. Without questioning the world's need for more Ph.D.s, and thus avoiding self examination, Basbanes noted that when a large university in Alameda County stopped buying books, its doctorates declined — thereby allowing a nearby Junior University to give it the Axe in total degrees as well as football. The point is: **FUND LIBRARIES!**

Libraries, whether public, private, or those of individual collectors, also buy books. Those who did not accept the splendid opportunity to acquire *Splendide Californie!* must buy now or soon check with favorite book dealers. Jim Robertson of Yolla Bolly Press produced a finely designed, magnificently illustrated portrayal of these French artists. At the Club's party on May 21, amidst the glories of the original paintings at the California Historical Society, the learned and attractive author — she's French, thank you, and one of the world's *necessary* Ph.D.s — held up a copy. In less than a month, almost four hundred flew out the door of the Book Club of California — splendidly.

We always enjoy the newsletter of our upriver cousins, the Sacramento Book Collectors Club. Editor Robert Young is in the process of donating his great-grandfather's books, letters, and scrapbooks to the Folger Shakespeare Library — yes, libraries like donations, too! The interest? Said ancestor, William Winter, a noted poet and drama critic, spent sixty-seven years in journalism. In 1865, when he joined Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune*, his home for forty-four years, he ruminated on the nature of genius. Here we plagiarize boldly: “[Genius] is felt rather than comprehended, and more readily appreciated than expressed,” he said. So often such people are outsiders to the world, but what beauty they create! As Winter phrased it, “Through the emotions, the whole soul is agitated and controlled;” a passion so huge that nothing else matters.

To that uncertainty of genius, we observe that Leland Stanford Junior University has published the *Selected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*. While Stanford undertakes to print all of Jeffers's works, editor Tim Hunt has put together 750 pages of the best. It is only 10 cents a page, hardback, or about the cost of a photocopy, 3 1/3 cents in paperback. The previous

selected edition contained only 111 pages. Jeffers readers should ponder his soul's creativity through a background of melodeon music. Available from the BCC for a mere \$87 is a 1989 "landscape" format book designed by Ward Ritchie, *A Book of Gaelic Airs for Una's Melodeon*.

To maintain equal balance between the Blue and Gold and the Cardinal, we see through the serendipity of a 1990 cliché discovery in an attic trunk, the Mark Twain Papers and Project at the University of California, Berkeley, has untangled its headline at last and can now sound the proper depths of Samuel Clemens's American classic, *Huckleberry Finn*. The reunification of the two halves of this influential novel produced the definitive edition, in bookstores now.

Perhaps even some Jeffers or Twain will surface on a small stage in San Francisco's copper-clad Sentinel Building at the gore of Kearny Street and Columbus Avenue, or in the town of the Tall Tree. One month, Francis Ford Coppola's Cafe Niebaum-Coppola sponsors readings of short stories in San Francisco and then the next month at Palo Alto — or readings alternate months at the same location. Cheese and wine from Coppola's vineyards are free. Go to Short Story Night. That's an offer you cannot refuse! [For reservations at 916 Kearny, call 415/788-7500, ext. 340; for 473 University Avenue, Palo Alto, call 650/752-0350; or go to [www.cafecoppola.com](http://www.cafecoppola.com).]

For a change of meter, continue up Columbus Avenue. Stop at the room with the shiny copper kettle. As this is a literary journal, far be it from us to trumpet Allan Paul's famous fire-brewed produce. In April, the San Francisco Brewing Company, "San Francisco's Original Brew Pub," which opened in 1985 (under a 1982 state law) as the fourth in the nation, began offering the North Beach Poetry Series. Mark Schwartz is the host for budding poets at 7 P.M. every Sunday. Be there at 155 Columbus Avenue (across from Pacific), or be square. Did we mention that the ghost of World Heavyweight Boxing Champ Jack Dempsey is still working the door as he did in the days of yore?

In 1907, when the pub emerged as the Andromeda Saloon — now the last Barbary Coast bar with its original mahogany fixtures, and during the time political boss Abe Ruef constructed the Sentinel Building, post-

cards flourished. Glenn D. Koch shows it all in *San Francisco Golden Age Postcards* (\$45). As Sausalito's Windgate Press produced it this year, the illustrations from 1900 to 1940 just pop from the page — and may even send readers collecting originals.

On April 4, the Library of Congress held its first Rare Book Forum. The topic? Though common, an important one: The relationship between private collectors and libraries. James H. Billington, the Librarian of Congress, opened the session remarking about the "collector's instinct." He announced that "collection-building was one of mankind's most basic urges." Of course, no collection can ever be complete without representatives from the Book Club of California! Keepsakes are acceptable.

Our next keepsake out is *More Treasures from the Book Club Library*. The indefatigable Barbara J. Land and printer Jim Wehlage produced the first set of twelve in 1997. For those living at a distance, an opening photograph sweeps the BCC library, Columbian Press, meeting room, and two hundred feet of shelving. This series emphasizes different book arts — a

## ATTENTION

*all Club members*



*A request from your  
Exhibitions Chairman:*

*Please submit your bookplates  
(and suggestions) to the Club  
for an exhibition on bookplates  
in early 2002.*

*GUEST CURATOR WILL BE CLUB MEMBER  
Steve Sharafian.*



1717 Book of Common Prayer entirely engraved; a 1799 French stereotyped book; an 1836 illustration printed in color using George Baxter's process with ten different woodblocks; and an 1823 French album of lithographs. Get the keepsake (at \$20) to discover other treasures.

In 1990, "California Avifauna" appeared, with Dr. Luis Felipe Baptista describing, and Pedro Julio Gonzalez painting, eleven California birds. The Club's legendary Oscar Lewis characterized the late Dr. Baptista as "the world's most distinguished authority on the birds of the Pacific Coast." Susan Acker printed keepsake folders showing the Acorn Woodpecker, Anna's Hummingbird, the Great Horned Owl, the California Quail, and others. Plunk down \$16.50 before this offer flies away!

Speaking of Oscar Lewis, in 1993, William Kostura and Susan Johnson produced a gracefully written keepsake pamphlet William F. Lewis: A San Francisco House Builder. Oscar's father, William Lewis (1850-1895) was a "spec[ulation]" builder; he gauged the real estate market, bought land, and built houses. Between 1883 and 1891, he constructed fifty-five, of which thirty-three survive, and fifteen residences exist as he built them. Marianne Hinckle & Sons used the type-setting seals at her Año Nuevo Island Press to issue this fine pamphlet; another \$20 bargain.

Donald J. Fleming, who aided Lewis with our feathered friends, comes into his own with a 1995 keepsake, "California Flora." Susan Acker designed twelve folders that bloom into De Pol's artistry. For \$16, graft it with the forthcoming book — John DePol's wood engravings!

At the Library of Congress symposium, Alice Schreyer, curator of Special Collections at the University of Chicago, traced the history of collections from the early twentieth century, when wealthy collectors such as Henry E. Huntington, Henry Clay Folger (whose library will soon enjoy William Winter's papers), and John Pierpont Morgan amassed incomparable ones, to post-World War II's knowledgeable, scholarly collectors, who donated specialized studies to form the basis of university holdings.

Schreyer's third period is now, and strife echoes the controversy over San Francisco's New Main Library, or electronic information versus acquisition. As summarized in the *Information Bulletin* of the Library of Congress, Special Collections Librarians no longer focus on "collection

development, but on information input and retrieval;" no longer do their skills entail "an intimacy with books." Not surprisingly, "the modern library," she concludes, "has alienated the private collector." Furthermore, William Reese, the nationally known dealer who wrote the preface for the Club's famed bibliography on the Gold Rush, added that as librarians have stopped educating collectors, rare book dealers and auction houses have taken over. It certainly came as a revelation to us that we could actually buy ephemeral items, letters, pamphlets, and photographs, along with books in our field of study. Warren Howell was a great teacher!

We just learned that on February 17, 2000, Hawaiian time, David Forbes, compiler of the *Hawaiian National Bibliography*, spoke on the lawn of the Honolulu Mission Houses about stalking elusive pamphlets and capturing wild ephemera. Unconfirmed rumors report that the replica of Captain James Cook's H.M.S. *Endeavour* brought her guns to bear on the festive throng and lobbed poi balls into the crowd. Of current interest, Forbes's second volume is out, and Richard H. Dillon will review it for the QN-L.

Our trend-setting club continues to set trends. As BCC director Dr. Roger K. Larson sends to the printer his manuscript detailing letters between poet George Sterling and acidic Ambrose Bierce, New Jersey's Fairleigh Dickinson University Press announces its own Sterling volume. Just out for \$45 [or about thirty pounds Sterling] is editor S.T. Joshi's compilation *From Baltimore to Bohemia: The Letters of H.L. Mencken and George Sterling*. What a sterling opportunity. Buy both!

— Robert J. Chandler

The Friends of Calligraphy sponsor "Calligraphic Type Design in the Digital Age: An Exhibition in Honor of the Contributions of Hermann and Gudrun Zapf" at the San Francisco Public Library, Skylight Gallery, September–October 2001. Curators are Sumner Stone, Susie Taylor, and Linnea Lundquist. For information about the concurrent series of lectures, please contact Nicholas Yeager, 707 431-0195 or [artifex@pipeline.com](mailto:artifex@pipeline.com)

The Bancroft Library of the University of California, Berkeley, has acquired the working papers of Club member Margot Patterson Doss. Mrs. Doss, who lives with her husband, John, in Bolinas, has had a long career in journalism — San Franciscans and others will remember her delightful column in the *Chronicle*, “San Francisco at your Feet.” Mrs. Doss’s career included covering the Federal Court in Wisconsin, other newspaper and magazine work, and a seven-year stint as on-camera editor for *Evening Magazine*, KPIX Channel 5; in retirement since 1991, she has contributed *Garden Gallivanting* to the *Point Reyes Light* “for fun” because she enjoys seeing gardens.

Anthony Bliss, chief curator at the Bancroft (and a Club member), suggested that Mrs. Doss’s literary connections with San Francisco’s Beat scene offer additional interest for scholars. (More about this appears in Mrs. Doss’s delightful reminiscence of her haunted house in Bolinas, No. 9 Brighton — where no less an exorcist than poet Philip Whalen cleared up the ghostly manifestations.) Bliss predicts that the sixty-two boxes of papers, scrapbooks, and photographs will take at least a year to index and catalog, but that the Margot Patterson Doss Archive will then be a valuable resource for researchers.

## THE ANNUAL MEETING OF *The Book Club of California*

will be held at the club rooms, 312 Sutter Street, 5th floor, on Tuesday, October 16, at 12 noon, to be followed by lunch and the regular meeting of the Board of Directors. All members wishing to attend will be welcome; please telephone a staff member at 415 781-7532 to order a sandwich.



The Book Club of Texas has printed a memorial to El Paso artist Tom Lea (1907 – 2001). *Randado* is a reprint of Lea's poetic account of a stay at this ruin of an old Spanish ranch where famous horses were raised. Although saddened by the occasion, we are pleased to receive this tribute.

*We name the hand of the craftsman Time  
At work in the lonely place  
Smoothing the shapes of the old days  
Into rounded myths and remembrances.*

### Gifts & Acquisitions

New members Timothy J. Conroy and Joseph L. Murray of Buffalo, New York, sent us their labor of love, *Dear Mr. Hunter: The letters of Vojtěch Preissig to Dard Hunter, 1920 – 1925*. This small book is delightfully designed and printed and of special interest to the Club because of its relevance to our Dard Hunter collection — we regret, as do the compilers, that the whereabouts of Hunter's responses is unknown. Preissig came to the United States from Czechoslovakia in 1910; his best-known work is the Limited Editions Club *Aucassin and Nicolette*. Mr. Conroy's introduction quotes George Macy: "Whenever one of my friends wonders what there is for the designer of books to do, I show him a copy of this book. Into it, Preissig poured his life's blood. The type is his, the ornaments are his, every page shows the great effort of his energy and taste to make the type and ornaments look right." Preissig returned to Czechoslovakia in 1931 and later was active in the resistance, but was arrested in 1941 and died in Dachau in 1944. We are grateful to have this "homage to Preissig's life and work," as Richard Kegler's informative foreword terms it, and we hope that the story of so dedicated a craftsman will become better known.



Barbara Land is once again to be thanked for finding an item that fits the Club's library to perfection. It is *The Compositor: As Artist, Craftsman & Tradesman* by Alexander Lawson, The Press of the Nightowl, Athens, Georgia, 1990. Our copy is numbered XII of thirty-three printed on dampened Canterbury handmade paper and signed by the author and the printer, Dwight Agner. The thirty-three special copies were bound in quarter leather by The Campbell-Logan Bindery. The wood engravings are by Joseph Sanders, and beautifully complement the informative study, in which many bits of history and lore are gracefully recounted. Mr. Lawson's last sentence bears quoting: "The long hours labeled as drudgery by Mr. Updike in his notable concluding paragraph of *Printing Types* have contributed to an increased understanding of mankind's curious ability to see beyond a quotidian existence in his search for greatness, as exemplified in his efforts to perpetuate the printed word."



Czeslaw Jan Grycz, CEO and Publisher of Octavo Corporation, has sent us another of his remarkable digital editions of rare books, this one William Blake's *The Book of Urizen* (ca. 1818, from The Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection at the Library of Congress). Nicolas Barker provides an informative commentary on this unique hand-colored example of Blake's visionary work — itself perhaps deserving of the term "multi-media" since Blake wrote, illustrated, engraved, printed, and colored each copy. To be able to study and enjoy such a rarity on a computer is amazing. Thanks, Octavo, for your visionary spirit and this example of your dedication.



Club member Jeffrey Thomas has presented the Club with a subscription to *Books and Company: The quarterly journal about books for those who delight in them*. This journal, which originates in Ebrington, Gloucestershire, U.K., is for committed readers, "hardbitten habitual readers, the sort of people who study the advertisements for personalized cutlery on the back of cereal packets," as one contributor to the Spring 2001 issue puts it. It is

marvelously varied, and includes a bibliography of the books mentioned in its articles — a useful touch. One of its features is a bracingly difficult Books Quiz, and the journal itself is in an attractive, compact paper-bound format. For subscription information (£40 in the U.S.), see the website: [www.booksandcompany.co.uk](http://www.booksandcompany.co.uk). Back issues are available.



Hiram Ash of Ice Island Press in Colebrook, Connecticut, sent for the library a nice cache of John Henry Nash items: Walter Pater's translation of *Cupid & Psyche*; William Makepeace Thackeray's *The Chest of Cigars*, in two different bindings; *The Sermon on the Mount*, done for the Club in 1921; Witter Bynner's *A Canticle of Praise*; the delightful *Last Will and Testament* of Charles Lounsbury, done for William Andrews Clark, Jr., as a Christmas keepsake in 1929; a facsimile of a letter by John Quincy Adams; and a memorial folio for President Warren Hall Landon of the San Francisco Theological Seminary. We are grateful for these characteristic, elegant imprints.



George F. Dowley brought in three items on bookbinding that will usefully augment the collection in that field: *Royal English Bookbinders*, 1896; *Bookbinding in America*, 1967; and *Extra Binding at the Lakeside Press*, 1925. Thank you, Mr. Dowley — and it was supererogatory to return that pathetic umbrella! (We are always glad to help at The Book Club of California.)



From member Loren Rothschild we have received *William Somerset Maugham: A Bibliographical Catalogue of the Loren & Frances Rothschild William Somerset Maugham Collection*, compiled and edited by Loren Rothschild and Deborah Whiteman, with an introduction by Paul Theroux (Heritage Book Shop, Los Angeles, 2001). This large, handsome book,



heavily illustrated and nicely designed, is an undoubted contribution to scholarship and a boon to those interested in Maugham. Mr. Rothschild generously displayed some of the choice items from the collection to those attending the 1998 Joint Meeting of the Roxburghe and Zamorano Clubs in Southern California, a memorable occasion brought back to mind by the sight of this volume. The dust jacket is arresting, reproducing Andrew Rhodes's ca.1960 lithograph of Maugham; the frontispiece is a color photograph of the bronze bust of a somewhat younger but equally impressive Maugham by Sir Jacob Epstein. Though Maugham's books, letters, and manuscripts, and works about Maugham, make up the bulk of the Rothschilds' collection, illustrations such as these entice even the non-specialist. Thank you to all concerned.

### *Elected to Membership*

<i>New Sustaining Members</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
Sandraline Cederwall	San Francisco	J. Curtiss Taylor
Gordon J. Van De Water	Diamond Bar	Muir Dawson
 <i>New Regular Members</i>		
Carmen M.M. Hermida	San Francisco	Jonathan Clark
Pierre Rioux, M.D.	Minot, ND	Membership Committee

*The following members have transferred from Sustaining to Patron status:*

Edward Surovell	Ann Arbor, MI
Katherine Z. Westheimer	Los Angeles

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